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Governor Kathleen Sebelius Announces Education Policy Team

Education Policy Team asked to focus on strategies and recommendations for accountability, efficiencies, and excellence in education

“Having good schools is intimately tied to having a thriving economy and an educated workforce will bring and keep good jobs in Kansas,” Governor Sebelius said.

She continued, “During the course of the campaign, I explained to Kansans that my top priority as Governor of this state would be to promote excellence in education, in every community in Kansas and in every grade. I renewed that commitment in outlining the 2004 budget, proposing that no revenue cuts be made to school revenue, including higher education.”

Education must be seen as a continuum from early childhood learning through elementary school, high school and include post-12th grade education. Governor Sebelius referred to a “P-16 system”-- an integrated system of education starting in preschool (the “P”) through a four-year college degree (“grade 16”). The goals are to improve student achievement by getting children off to a good start, raising academic standards, conducting appropriate assessments, improving teacher quality, and generally smoothing student transitions from one level of learning the next. Seeing education as a continuum focuses on helping all children meet the proficiency levels needed to succeed at the next education level and in the workforce.

Governor Sebelius released the list of committed Kansans who she says, “Have a passion for educational excellence and are willing to donate their time and energy to make recommendations to me about goals we should set for improvements for our current system.” The Team leader is Sylvia Robinson, Director of Education Policy.

“We have wonderful schools and college opportunities in Kansas. Our children test among the top in the country and graduate from high school at high rates. But unless we have a plan for the future, a focus for an integrated system of learning so Kansas becomes known as a national leader in education, we can quickly lose our competitive edge. And education is so intimately tied to our economic recovery and growth we can’t afford to set our sights any lower,” said Governor Sebelius.

The Team focus will be on the P-16 system in Kansas. In addition to team members, key resource advisors working with the group are: Leadell Ediger, Executive Director from the Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and Joyce Cusimano from the Kansas Children’s Cabinet, Education Commissioner Andy Tompkins, and Reggie Robinson, the President & CEO of the Board of Regents.

The first meeting of the Education Policy Team is 12 p.m., Wednesday, February 5, at the USD 501 building, 624 W. 24th Street, Topeka. These meetings are open to the public. Future meetings will be determined once the group meets initially.

The complete team list, information regarding future meetings and updates related to the progress of the team will be posted on the website at www.ksgovernor.org.

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